

Always The Best



PROPCYCLE

best
by Air



MOTOCROSS GO!

best
by Land



FINAL
FURLONG



RAPID RIVER

best
by Sea

Best By Far

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namco
The Game Creator
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Coin Cascade Ltd., 34 Birmingham Drive, Christchurch,
Ph 338 1411, Fax 338 1410

MIDWAY

BLITZ



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PLAYERS

THE
BIGGEST
NFL GAME
THIS SEASON ISN'T ON T.V.
IT'S IN YOUR
FACE!



TIME OUT

MARCH 1998



MIDWAY

近日登場

何者にも制限されない



SYSTEM 2000 CABINETS

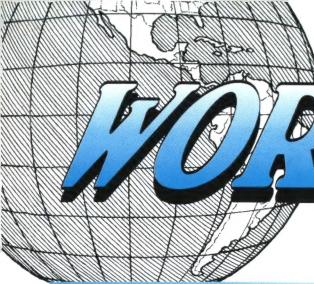


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in standard resolution
53" & 50" CABINETS
also available as a 38" dual resolution

COMPATIBLE
for any game
PRODUCED IN
new zealand

53" MODEL PICTURED

SEATED
and non seated
VERSIONS



WORLD JOURNAL

MARCH 1998

MARCH 3-4

AMEX '98

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Contact: Susan Feery
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Fax: +353 45 521 198

MARCH 3-5

THEME PARKS & FUN CENTRES SHOW

World Trade Centre
Dubai, UAE
Contact: International Expo
Ph: +971 4 354960
Fax: +971 4 354964

MARCH 4-5

2ND IATA TRADE FAIR

Spa Hotel, Lucan
Dublin, Ireland
Contact: IATA
Ph: +353 53 41316
Fax: +353 53 21009

MARCH 11-12

INDIA AMUSEMENT EXPO

Taj Palace Hotel
New Delhi, India
Contact: William T Glasgow
Inc
Ph: +1 708 333 9292
Fax: +1 708 333 4086

MARCH 12-15

SPRING ENADA

Rimini Trade Fair Centre
Italy
Contact: Knights Management
Ph: +44 1323 442747
Fax: +44 1323 840014

MARCH 20-22

FEXPO '98

Palacio Victoria Eugeni
Barcelona, Spain
Contact: Interalia
Ph: +34 3 416 1466
Fax: +34 3 415 0095

MARCH 24-26

IGBE '98

Sands Convention Centre
Las Vegas, Nevada
Contact: Ullo International
Ph: +1 203 852 0500
Fax: +1 203 838 3710

MARCH 26-28

AMUSEMENT SHOWCASE INTERNATIONAL '98

Sands Expo Centre
Las Vegas, Nevada
Contact: William T Glasgow
Ph: +1 708 333 9292
Fax: +1 708 333 4086

MARCH 30 -APRIL 1

AIC'S 6TH AUSTRALASIAN CASINOS & GAMING CONFERENCE

Parkroyal Darling Harbour
Sydney, Australia
Contact: AIC Conferences Ltd
Ph: +61 2 9210 5700
Fax: +61 9211 7773

APRIL 2-4

CANADIAN GAMING

SUMMIT & EXH'N '98

Bonaventure Hilton Hotel
Quebec, Canada
Contact: Canadian Gaming
Ph: +1 905 855 5370
Fax: +1 905 855 1869

APRIL 30 - MAY 2

WORLD OF

ENTERTAINMENT '98

Vystaviste Praha
Prague, Czech Republic
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Fax: +420 2 2491 4249

APRIL 1998

The show this year was held on the 18th and 19th of February at the Makuhari Convention Centre. The winter weather contrasted sharply with the summer weather in New Zealand but was certainly refreshing. While the AOU was well attended it was not as busy as previous years with a noticeable absence of Asian customers and other regular international visitors.

Those that attended agreed that business internationally is slow with a general falloff in revenue and customer attendance. While a lack of original product was the easiest to blame it is also noticeable that we must reconsider our offerings to the public and must be more proactive in marketing our business in the competitive environment we find ourselves in.

PRODUCT

APCOM'S stand is always one of the busiest at the show and this year proved no exception. While **Marvel vs Capcom** has already been released, performing strongly as a "B" board upgrade; Capcom promises a further release on this system in July with **Street Fighter Alpha 3**. **Plasma Sword** using the Sony hardware system uses four buttons and is a great fighting game

based on Capcom's fourth empire ... a modern medieval tale racing at 60 frames per second with some great special effects and moves.

Also on the Sony system we saw a preview of **Street Fighter Ex 2** due for release in June. While this game promises more of the same the programmers have gone to some length to give the new characters some real depth. Look out for this game when it arrives.

SNK were rumoured to be ready with a new game for their Neo 64 system but this was not on the floor. **Samurai Shodown 64** was though and was well received by the players. This game has performed strongly in many markets but SNK will need to work on the system cost before they achieve much penetration in the soft international market.

Two new games for their existing Neo Geo system were: **Metal Slug 2** an update on what must be one the their best

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The easy-to-handle, high cost-performance NEO GEO has reached a new level of excellence. Now it packs two capabilities: A high-grade 3-D function that produces life-like computer graphics, and a sophisticated 2-D function for sleek and vivid animation. These dual functions come together in a single piece of hardware-Hyper NEO GEO 64. A PCB that will open a new frontier of profitable possibilities in the amusement world.



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\$8,800

USES STANDARD
POWER SUPPLY/
RECONDITIONED



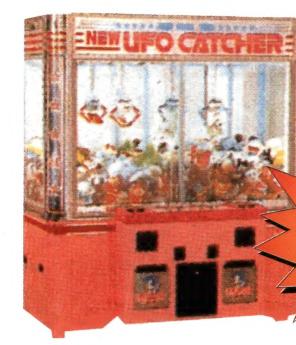
\$98,000

SKY TARGET



\$13,900

UFO CATCHER



\$5,600

TWIN
SKILLTESTER
WITH TWIN
ELECTRONIC
MECHS

TIME CRISIS DX



\$14,800

TIME CRISIS SD



\$11,600

NZ MADE,
CABINET MAY
VARY FROM
PICTURE

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CABINET MAY
VARY FROM
PICTURE

TIME OUT

HOT SPECIALS

COSMO GANGS



CYBER SLED



DEAD OR ALIVE



EACH
\$990

ROM CONVERSION
KIT TO UPGRADE
ANY VF2 GAME

DR-360



OUTRUNNERS (TWIN)



JET WAVE



TIME OUT

RAPID RIVER

Lifejacket Optional



RAPID RIVER is a fantasy white water adventure for players of all ages. The unique game cabinet is equipped with a 50" screen, "raft" like seat, simple, intuitive paddle controls and viewpoint button for first or third person views. The pneumatic seat movement adds to the realism of the game.



- Secret codes and short cuts.
- Dramatic bonus ending!
- Multi-branching course provides different routes for depth and variety.
- Each branch is themed differently.
- Combining the various routes at different times allows for numerous white water adventures.

UNIQUE NEW
ZEALAND MACHINE

namco
The Game Creator

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AOU 1998

performers to date. This game has tested very strongly in most markets and is really a must have for operators. A lot of great moves and some real differences make this a brilliant game that never lets up.



Real Bout 2 - The New Comers was only 85% complete and is programmed for release in April. This game offers more of the same and it will be interesting to see how it performs.

NAMCO had the hit of the show (as far as our market is concerned) with their brilliant **Time Crisis 2** twin player gun game available in standard or delux twin cabinets. Although only 85% complete this game is great. It incorporates Namco's System 23 pcb and an exclusive woofer sound system. The concept of the pedal is the same but



players can now compete and see their partner on the same screen as they are. Test reports in Japan and the USA have this unit doing better money than anything else.

Down Hill Bikers simulates the excitement of actual downhill mountain bike racing without all of the exhaustion. Players are seated on a mountain bike frame and actually pedal to increase speed as they race downhill. A game that is a lot of fun and is really competitive. The bikes are very robust and testing has shown some good income figures.



Namco have also tried something new with their latest fighting game **Ehrgeiz**. This is the first of a new square three dimensional approach to games. Characters can run in all directions, jump on obstacles and corner posts and shoot opponents with special weapons. Controls are simple for beginners but with plenty of special commands and moves the real experts are also catered for.

Players have a choice of eight fighters to choose from and four buttons and a standard control. This game is currently in stock.

Redemption is becoming more popular in Japan and **Family Bowl** and **Hammer Champ** were

TIME OUT

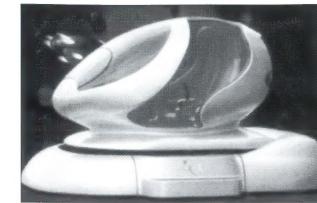
SEGA OF AMERICA CLOSING DOWN?

Reports coming out of the US suggest that all is not well at Sega of America. The company is said to have laid off its entire US product development, software development, marketing and PR departments. It is also reported to be holding off all new releases

until 1999. Dan Stevens, Director of Marketing and PR, has skirted around the subject of staff reduction, but stated that five new Saturn games will ship between now and May. Not necessarily so say the gossips...

CAMBER CHOOSES TROCADERO FOR FX-2

Camber Entertainment's sensational new FX-2 simulator is to make its UK debut at the Funland Family Entertainment Centre in London's Trocadero. The 2-seat, interactive simulator will be installed later this month, following its official launch at ATEI. According to Camber's Managing Director, Paul Spence, the FX-2 has exceeded all expectations since its worldwide introduction at IAAPA. "We have already received



orders from Australia, North America and Europe and are looking forward to ATEI enormously.

FIVE CENT COINS TO STAY

The Reserve Bank today announced that, after extensive public consultation, it had decided to retain five cent coins, and to make no changes to the size of 20 and 50 cent coins.

The Bank in October last year initiated a review of the nation's coinage.

Reserve Bank Chief Manager Currency Department Brian Lang said today "The main reason why we've decided to stick with the status quo is that in the end the costs to the community of changing New Zealand's coins would have been greater than the benefits.

"We talked extensively to the coin operated machine industry, representatives of low-income people, retailers, banks and business sector groups. We also polled the public and received extensive written submissions.

"We've decided to retain 5 cent

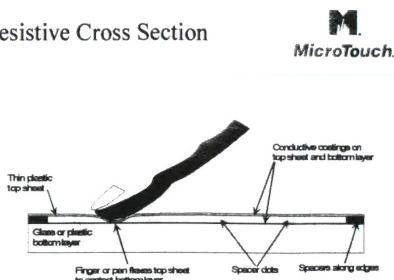
coins primarily because:

- Retailers and especially small retailers, favoured retention, as they use 5 cent coins a lot to give change.
- Representatives of the poor feared that prices would be rounded up, disadvantaging low income people. There was also wider concern for the inflationary implications.
- The confectionery trade and children pointed out that the young often make 5 cent purchases of sweets.

"The main reason for retaining the present 20 and 50 cent coins was the cost to the community of change. We estimated that reducing the size of these coins would require the re-calibration of most coin-operated machines, which would have cost their owners up to \$17 million. There would also have been additional coin-handling costs during the transition.

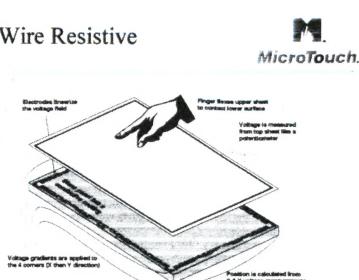
TECHNICAL Update

Resistive Cross Section



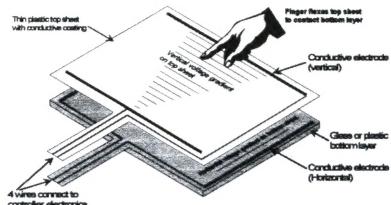
M.
MicroTouch.

5 / 7 Wire Resistive



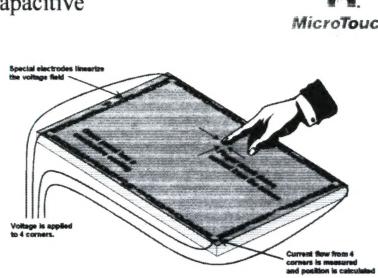
M.
MicroTouch.

4 / 8 Wire Resistive



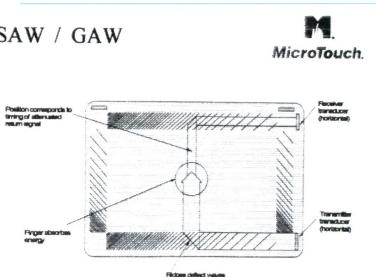
M.
MicroTouch.

Capacitive



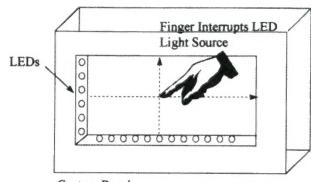
M.
MicroTouch.

SAW / GAW



M.
MicroTouch.

InfraRed



M.
MicroTouch.

TROUBLE SHOOTING TIPS

COMMUNICATIONS

- TouchScreen - Controller
- Controller - System

TOUCHSCREEN - CONTROLLER

- Is there Power? • Is there Touch?
- Error Codes

CONTROLLER - SYSTEM

- Baud Rate • Data Format
- Comm Port/IRQ Settings

ENVIRONMENT - Something Changed

- Unstable Power • Degaussing Coil • Change in Video • Change in Environment

AOU 1998



Namcos entries in this category.

Pinpoint Shot; a laser rifle shooting game had been further refined and will now fit into a smaller space while still utilising an arcades dead air space above the rest of the normal machines.

SEGA had the busiest game of the show with **Virtual On - Oratorio Tangram**.

This game (although only 85% complete) attracted huge crowds each day. The game is simple to understand but very complex to master and is the sequel in the Virtual On series. It utilises the same double control format and offers 12 different virtuaroids, each with different weapons. The original game performed poorly in our market and is likely that this update will also be slow.

Sega Rally 2 was at the show and was very popular. The game utilises the new 3D-CG pcb and has great graphics. Players can choose from six rally cars with 2 modes and four stages. As with the original game you can link up to four player stations. All the old rally features were there as well as a new handbrake (very similar to GTi Club) that few players seemed to use. The delux unit will be available sometime in April with the twin due for release approximately one month later. The game was a bit on the easy side (Sega advised that they would be altering



this) but otherwise it was very much a Rally 2.



Sega advised that both **Rally 2** and **Daytona 2** have been on site test since late last year and both drivers will be released this year with Daytona 2 slated for release sometime in June or July. There was no information on which unit has been testing the best, but Sega seemed confident about both.

AOU 1998

Fighting Vipers 2

utilising the new real time 3D CG model 3 pcb is an update on what for our market was not a great fighting game. Sega have put a lot of effort into this unit and it will be interesting to see if it can live up to its price tag.



Harley Davidson in a twin delux and standard format was hidden a little bit inside the stand. The delux linked version is a great game and a real collectors piece. The game really appeals to the male ego (unlike the Namco motorcycle Motor Cross Go that appeals to both male and female players) and although complicated will give the advanced player a real ride for their money.

Get Bass was a game that I have seen before and was again on show (one of four different bass fishing games available at the show) but this time in a 29" format. A new fishing real styled control

gave the game some realism by creating line drag in the water and a real "wack" when the fish actually bit.

Not really a game for our market but some fun anyway for those who enjoy simulated fishing.

KONAMI also had a large display and some new games based around their new hardware system.

Racing Jam in a twin format has not proven to be a great game. Despite all the power of the new

hardware and a great graphical presentation the game has not performed well.

Teraburst (available in dedicated delux form or as an upgrade for Thunder Hurricane) has some nice features and is a big improvement over its predecessor Thunder Hurricane. The game looks and plays well and should be a good earner in the delux format as Konami have really improved both the graphics and game/gun interaction.

Although the winter Olympics are currently on in Japan I was still surprised to see a new skiing game **Skiers High** on the Konami stand. Both Namco and Sega have already done this particular category to death.

Battle Tryst is a new three button fighting game and it looked ok. Konami did not do well with its predecessor Fighting Wu-Shu as this game was far too expensive for the income it generated. It will be interesting to see how this latest attempt fairs.

Although seen before Konami had two different games



TIME OUT

SPECIALS

ORANGE BALL

DOYLE
REDEMPTION
GAME



\$10 \$2 COIN MECHS



GE706 BULB



GUN SHELLS

PINK & BLUE
LETHAL
ENFORCER
TYPE



CLEAR TOP BUTTONS

GREEN & YELLOW



YELLOW NETBALL



POWER SUPPLY

COMPUTER TYPE



SPECIALS ONLY
AVAILABLE FROM
10 MARCH TO 31 APRIL
PRICES EXCLUDE GST



An Internet Survey...

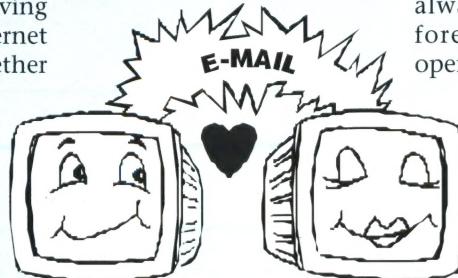
This month marks the half-year anniversary of Play Meter's drive to create a significant presence on the Internet and our Web site is sporting a new look! We recently presented a redesigned home page that utilises frames, allowing readers to move more easily between the different departments available in cyberspace.

The menu frame on the left hand side of the page remains constant for those of you unfamiliar with this type of Web page, while the choice selected from this menu appears on the right hand side of your computer screen, eliminated the need to navigate between pages just to return to the menu bar.

We began the Internet project last year with the idea of using our Web site to provide regularly updated material for our readers, material that had come to our attention after the magazine had already gone to bed but before it had reached your mailboxes.

Thus, Play Meter News Now was born. While our presence on the Internet dates back close to three years, the advent of News Now brought us in line with the evolving philosophy of other Internet content providers - whether they were an organ of an existing print magazine or an exclusively online publication - to constantly update.

Since August



when News Now first appeared, we have been working hard to refine our Internet strategy. News Now is updated once a week, and gives operators an edge by providing the most up-to-date news including industry developments, trade show coverage, and factory and distributor updates. It is the keystone of our Web presence and the first thing you find when traveling to www.playmeter.com.

Loyal subscribers get a preview of what is to come in their next issue, and would-be readers are able to sample the flavour of our 24-years young publication. In addition to News Now, our Website contains and updated industry calendar, links to related sites, and sample material from the current issue including excerpts from special sections, all three editorials, a shortened version of our Equipment Poll, and a look at the front cover.

Not long after News Now was launched, Play Meter also embarked on a survey of our readers, a survey which all of you received and many of you were kind enough to return with your honest

thoughts and comments about our publication. As you may have noticed, we are already responding to those comments with more focus on the issues that most concern our operator subscribers.

Of those who completed the survey, 42 percent said they visited industry trade publication Web sites including ours, a figure that was pleasantly surprising. So this month, I have decided to conduct an informal survey of my own. Here's the list of questions I would like to pose to you:

- 1. Did you already know that News Now is updated weekly? Is that often enough?**
- 2. How often do you visit Play Meter's Web site?**
- 3. Do you prefer any other industry Web sites to Play Meter's?**
- 4. What other material would you like to see on Play Meter's Web site?**
- 5. How could Play Meter's Web site further assist you in your business?**

I look forward to hearing your responses. As always, our job first and foremost is to serve our operator readers who have been loyal subscribers. Beyond that, we are always looking for new readers interested in the business of the coin-op amusement industry.

TIME OUT

AOU 1998

in **Handle Champ**, a fun type driving skill game and **Beatmania**, a DJ type boogie beat game. Both games are worth keeping an eye on

as they are certainly new and fun concepts.

Bass Angler



also had a new unique fishing reel type control that allowed players to try their luck at Bass

fishing in a number of different bays with a choice of lures and with three different modes. The control gives you feedback in the form of drag and a real thump when you get a strike. The Sega unit was the better although this game is certainly cheaper.

Train Go 2: TAITO'S sequel to its number one hit in Japan involves the player in driving and shunting trains (not a popular past time in New Zealand). **Puzzle**

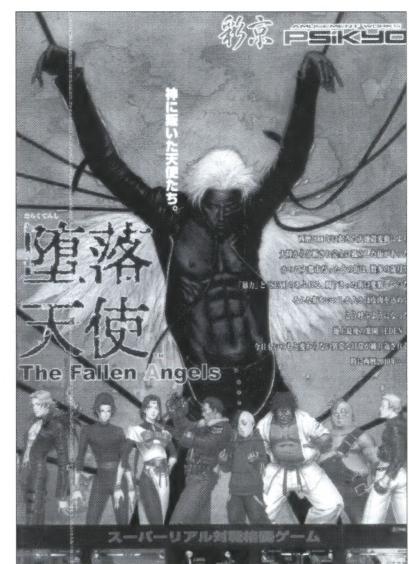


Bobble 4 certainly looks good and as a low cost upgrade on the Taito system is certainly worth a go. All the old favourite parts of the game are present with some great new additions.

Psychic Force Twenty Twelve is a fighting game with a difference. A large crowd watched this game and players certainly seemed to enjoy it.

A number of new games were available as PCB upgrades or systems upgrades. The best of these were: a PCB upgrade **Guardian Force** from Nihon. This is a vertical space wars type game utilising three buttons.

Judge Dredd the Acclaim gun upgrade kit.



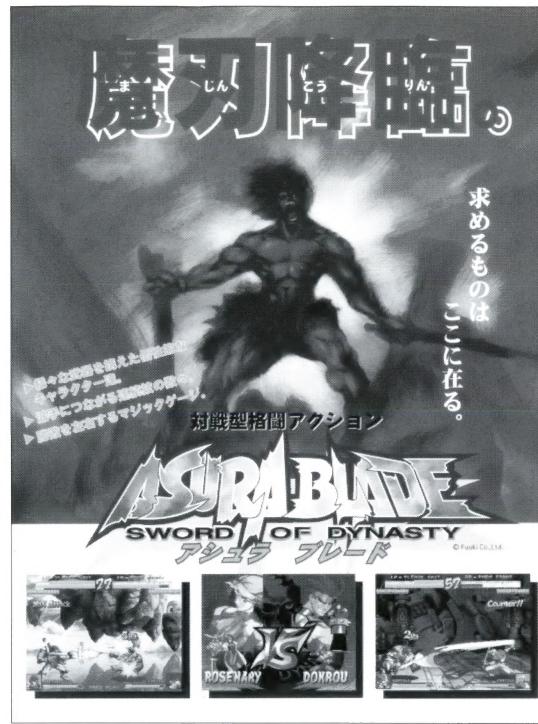
The Fallen Angels from Psikyo. A fighting game worth a look and boasting some very unusual contestants and fight sequences.

Astro Superstars from Tecmo. A comic fighting game with excellent moves and good sized characters and action. **World Cup Soccer '98** and **Cool Boarders**

AOU 1998

also from Tecmo. Cool Boarders is a snow board type sports game.

Asurablade - Sword of Dynasty from Jaleco. Another fighter with some different weapon



and player combinations. Good graphics and an intense range of characters. This is a 32 bit hardware game with upgrade capacity and boasts over 10 different stages and 8 characters.

Radiant Silvergun from Treasure, a horizontal air combat, space ship fighting type game with plenty of firepower and a range of

weapon options.

The popularity of the digital camera and photo booths has certainly not waned for the manufacturers and virtually every stand had a camera machine of some sort. I bought home transfer tattoos, a new watch with my picture on it, a jigsaw puzzle with my picture as well as a cup, a t-shirt all with my picture on them. Not good for much accept novelty and certainly not worth reviewing for our market.

The Japanese have moved heavily into novelty products and as they have very limited value in our market these have also not been included.

So the showcase for the Japanese internal market has come and gone and with it the clear message that there is currently no new "miracle" machine that will revive the soft trend we have seen emerge over the last 12 months.

Still - there are some very good units available at a range of prices and many these will provide a great ROI.

It will be interesting to see if the American Show in March has much else to offer.

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LOWER N/I
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Mobile 021 500-065
Fax 04 384 6754

SOUTH ISLAND
Garth Ennor
Ph 03 338-1411
Mobile 025 221-8694
Fax 03 338-3141



Armageddon is the latest video game to crawl out of Acclaim's dungeons, and AB Europe's On Test team put it through its paces. Well, it may be the end of the world, but you can still have a laugh, can't you?

The latest video release to mark the resurgence of Acclaim is Armageddon. Licensed from the hugely popular Magic: the Gathering collectible card game, Armageddon puts players into a duel of sorceries in which they must cast spells, either to summon monsters or to fire magical blasts at their opponents. The game boasts simple controls, including a track ball, to attract new players, but has extra levels in the gameplay and, at advanced levels, requires a great deal of strategy. It is also Acclaim's



first game to utilise the company's new Epidemic hardware.

AUSTRALIA'S WONDERLAND ADDS RIDES

Australia's Wonderland in Sydney has announced several new developments for the park to further enhance its appeal to international and domestic visitors.

The park recently purchased the historic Gondola Lift from the Sydney Royal Easter Show. The new \$2.3 million Skyrider air-lifts visitors across the length of the park, providing not only unique photo opportunities, but also spectacular views of the nearby Blue Mountains.

Australia's Wonderland, which recently won the award for Premier Tourist Attraction by the Tourism Council of Australia, offers





All together now....

Cpen arcade architecture is supposed to be all about standardisation. The point that's being missed, according to Norman Leftly, is that the only thing that's standard in coin-op is a desire to be different.

While Microsoft might have done a sterling job convincing the operators that they would benefit from a standard platform they failed to set the standards for the manufacturers and already, even at this early stage, there are four or five non-standard systems. Although Microsoft were again present at this year's AMOA, they appear to have gone to ground since. The mysterious lack of response at the www address 'coinop@microsoft.com' might be more than just a network problem.

Claude Leglise, VP of the Content Group at Intel, a US\$24bn high-tech company with over 63,000 employees worldwide, entered the coin-op arena at this year's AMOA with a keynote speech entitled 'Open Arcade Architecture - Games for the Next

Generation.' Leglise told the impressive gathering that the pace of development in PCs was racing ahead of consumer console technology, that a current PC loaded with graphic enhancers can out-perform a Sega Model 3 PCB and, that we can expect to see a ten-fold increase in graphics on the PC in the next three years.

To date, over 80 companies have joined the Open Arcade Architecture Forum formed by Intel and other industry leaders earlier this summer. Leglise explained "With a common architecture we can expect to see games with common elements running on home computers, arcade machines and theme park simulators. With this 'develop once and modify slightly' concept, the industry will be able to take it's pick from an average 900 games a year now available for home computers, compared to the 50 new titles currently produced by the coin-op industry."

The greater majority of product along Developers Row area was either work in-

progress or near-completed games housed in a prototype cabinet. The National Amusement Network Inc (NANI) boys have got their act together and, in conjunction with Monolith, another software developer, they have published enough information on the worldwide web to enable most game developers to gain an understanding of what's required. Sadly, the weakest part of the whole idea, from the opening overtures of Microsoft, has been the lack of coin-op input. Our industry can sense this weakness and it's making them nervous.

Right now the idea of a standard platform is as much a dream as when the AMOA first announced the idea, and software developers may not have understood that while the hardware may follow some kind of standard, the security access to each manufacturer's system will inhibit some bright spark coming along and being able to release a software package that will run on anything with the PC label. Maybe operators failed to understand this, too.

TOUCHMASTER 3000

Midway Games Inc., began shipping Touchmaster 3000, a major software upgrade to its earlier countertop touchscreen game, in December. The new machine adds six new games to the software menu and provides an innovative Touch Key system that allows operators to set up an access menu to provide locations with control over a variety of Touchmaster features.

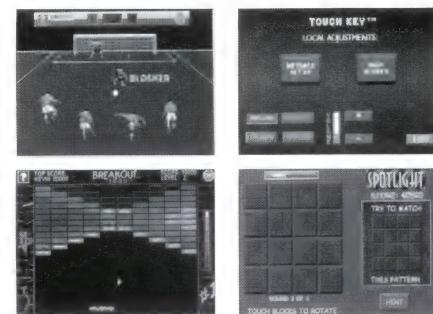
Touchmaster 3000 includes the company's first games in the erotic category: Erotic Solitaire and Strip Poker. Midway designers traveled to Las Vegas to film leading models on location, both male and female. The models posed exclusively for Midway and

will be seen only in Touchmaster 3000 (another tough road trip assignment for those dedicated Midway game guys, huh?)

The latest action game, Kick Champion, is a soccer-themed game that the factory calls simple but addictive. "The game capitalizes on the appeal of the world's most popular sport, and it fits perfectly into any market," said Midway executives. Players can choose from several different uniforms or even choose to play soccer with cows!

Another new game, Breakout 3000, is the first

Touchmaster game pulled from Midway's vast catalogue of classic hit video games. Midway has the rights to over 400 classic video games, and many will be implemented into Touchmaster in the years ahead. There are 97 levels of action in this timeless favourite that players are instantly familiar with.

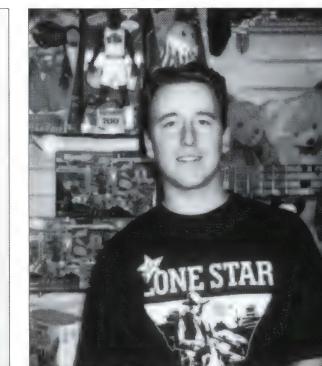


NEW STAFF APPOINTMENTS

COIN CASCADE WOULD LIKE TO CONGRATULATE THE FOLLOWING STAFF ON THEIR RECENT PROMOTION



STEPHEN PRICE
OPERATIONS MANAGER



DANIEL COOKE
CENTRE MANAGER
NORTHLANDS



BRENT CAMPBELL
CENTRE MANAGER
MOORHOUSE

San Francisco

RUSH THE ROCK

ALCATRAZ EDITION

It's a brand new RUSH !

This product is marketed in NZ under an exclusive distribution licence held by Coin Cascade Ltd.

All the features that made the original a classic!

- Intensely real driving
 - Four unique handling models
 - Spectacular jumps, crashes, and stunts
 - Eight-way linkability

Plus all-new features:

- Four new tracks (for a total of seven)
 - Four new cars (for a total of twelve)
 - Two dozen new shortcuts
 - New music
 - Mirrored-tracks feature

Available in a new single-seat two-piece cabinet or as a conversion for existing SF Rush units.

Link-ready when shipped.

Operator options:

- Link kit - metal spacer brackets**
Hub kit - Ethernet hub to link 3 or more units
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www.atarigames.com

CONVERSION KITS NOW SHIPPING!

This product is marketed in NZ under an exclusive distribution licence held by Coin Cascade Ltd.



SNK

THE LAST BLADE

This product is marketed in NZ under an exclusive distribution licence held by Coin Cascade Ltd.

Now Available for your Neo-Geo



THE LAST BLADE • A New Fighting Action Series Begins!

Explosive, detailed graphics and enticing characters combined in a single game will attract crowds of players to your location.

Unique "Strength" and "Attack" modes enhance the competitive play. The "D" button repels intense attacks and creates an ideal chance to deliver real damage to your opponent. The challenge of reading your opponent's moves will increase the excitement of competition.

The Last Blade will bring your location earnings you can bank on!

For more information, contact your authorized distributor or:

SNK Corporation of America, 2502 Stevens Creek Blvd., San Jose CA 95128 • Tel.(408) 292-4550/Fax(408) 292-4271

*Game screens and specifications are subject to change without prior notice for product improvement.

32

Challenging Game Play

Superior Graphics!

FINAL FURLONG™

Join us in the winner's circle!

Use a rocking motion to encourage your horse down the straight-away. Press your whip button to gain maximum speed! Use the reins to avoid the rail and other horses as it will slow your horse down.

You must pace your horse based on the horses' abilities. Otherwise, the horse will lose stamina before it reaches the finish line.

- ① Select from 1 of 3 tracks:
6 1/2 Furlongs
1 Mile
1 1/2 Mile
- ② Link two cabinets for the ultimate 4 player racing experience
- ③ Photo-finishes determine the winner in those oh so close races.
- ④ Races are broadcast "live" to add to the realism of the sport!



This product is marketed in NZ under an exclusive distribution licence held by Coin Cascade Ltd.

Choose 1 of 6 Horses

LEADER

This horse maintains its pace in the first position. Be careful not to run too fast or you will lose the stamina needed to finish the race in the first place.



FRONT RUNNER

This horses' best pace is between the 2nd and 4th position.



MID RUNNER

The 5th to 7th is the best position for this horse in the first half of the race.



STRONG FINISHER

This horse hangs back until the "sprint point" and then busts loose with all its' might.



2 ALMIGHTY RUNNER'S

For novice jockeys. This horse can keep pace in any of the previous positions.



2-Player Game Specifications:
Installed Dimensions: 89" H x 68.5" W x 85" D
Power Consumption: 450 watts
Specifications subject to change without notice.

namco
The Game Creator

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13

NEW ZEALAND NEWS

AUCKLAND NEWS...

Sunday 15th February saw an estimated 3500 people converge on the Auckland Domain for the annual Bike the Bays Fun Ride. Riders entered to cycle either the 25km or 35km course. A 5km course was provided for the youngsters. The main course left the Auckland Domain and proceeded down Parnell Road, along Tamaki Drive to St Heliers and returned via the same route to the Domain. The day was fine with a slight breeze.

TimeOut Magazine is only now able to reveal the true reason

that recently saw the world famous (but not in Whangaroa) Girl Power Spice Girls visit our sunny Northland shores. Posh (aka Video) Spice visited Whangaroa together with Baby and Ginger Spices to discuss a new joint venture with Maarten Boogert and Kevin Grundy of Stages TimeOut. The Spice Girls recognising the TimeOut Group as the industry leaders in coin operated amusement machines in New Zealand, sought advice on all facets of running a successful operation. The new venture

will see a world wide chain of "SpiceZone" Entertainment Centres comprising the latest simulators and video games in a tasteful (but Spicy) ambience. The (world) first location is rumoured to be opening in Lower Queen Street, Auckland Central, early June of this year. The opening of "SpiceZone" Queen Street coinciding with the closure of Stages TimeOut and the start of the Britomart development is unintentional and purely coincidental. As a mark of respect to the locals, the Spice Girls have agreed not to sing at the opening.

WELLINGTON NEWS...

A well known operator has recently commissioned and had completed a full portrait of himself, operators and friends wishing to view this stunning masterpiece may queue at his office where it has pride of place on the wall.

Timezone Manners Mall opened its doors on Friday the 20th of February after a hectic couple of days training up new staff, setting up machines, and installing the one and only "Galaxian" residing in New Zealand. The

ARTS

PINBALLS

1. Williams MEDIEVAL MADNESS
2. Bally CIRQUUS VOLTAIRE
3. Bally NBA FASTBREAK
4. Bally SCARED STIFF
5. Williams JUNKYARD
6. Williams ARABIAN NIGHTS
7. Bally ATTACK FROM MARS
8. Williams JOHNNY MNEMONIC
9. Bally THEATRE OF MAGIC
10. Bally NO FEAR

PRIZE REDEMPTION

1. Harry Levy SUPER HOOP LA
2. Taito SOLOTTOL
3. Design Plus PRO STRIKER
4. LAI TURTLE MERCHANDISER
5. LAI MOUSE ATTACK
6. Jaleco SPIDER STOMPIN DX
7. Fun House GAMES TICKET TAC TOE
8. LAI TICKEE TICKATS
9. ICE CYCLONE
10. LAI STADIUM BASKETBALL

• S • T • A • T • E • S

PINBALLS

1. Williams MEDIEVAL MADNESS
2. Bally ATTACK FROM MARS
3. Sega X-FILES
4. Sega THE LOST WORLD
5. Bally THE ADDAMS FAMILY
6. Bally THEATRE OF MAGIC
7. Bally CIRQUUS VOLTAIRE
8. Bally SCARED STIFF
9. Sega INDEPENDENCE DAY
10. Williams ARABIAN NIGHTS

PRIZE REDEMPTION

1. ICE CYCLONE
2. Rainbow RAINBOW
3. Bromley COLORAMA
4. Bay Teck BASKET FEVER
5. Benchmark BIG HAUL
6. 5 Star SURFIN' SAFARI
7. Planet Earth TREASURE FALLS
8. Seidel SMOKIN' TOKEN
9. Planet Earth DINOSCORE
10. Island SPIDER STOMPIN

• A • L • A • N • D

PINBALLS

1. Williams MEDIEVAL MADNESS
2. Williams CIRQUUS VOLTAIRE
3. Williams NO GOOD GOFERS
4. Williams ARABIAN NIGHTS
5. Williams NBA FASTBREAK



• A • N • D

PINBALLS

1. Williams MEDIEVAL MADNESS
2. Midway NBA FASTBREAK
3. Midway ADDAMS FAMILY
4. Data East JURASSIC PARK
5. Sega BATMAN FOREVER



OTHER NEWS...

Despite quiet times a number of new operators around the country are appearing and are keen to invest in our industry. While we bemoan our own

"quiet" times it is worth noting that many other businesses are finding it worse and at least at the end of the week all our income is in "cash" and

we are not waiting for someone else to pay us. New operators take a new approach to business and are keen on the returns they see occurring.

CHIA

A • U • S • T •

DEDICATED GAMES

1. Namco **MOTOCROSS GO DX**
2. Namco **FINAL FURLONG**
3. Midway **OFF ROAD CHALLENGE**
4. Atari **SAN FRANCISCO RUSH THE ROCK**
5. Namco **RAPID RIVER**
6. Sega **VIRTUA COP 2 DX**
7. Sega **RALLY CHAMP**
8. Midway **CRUIS'N THE WORLD**
9. Midway **MORTAL KOMBAT 4**
10. Namco **ALPINE RACER II**

CONVERSION GAMES

1. Sega **VIRTUA STRIKER 2**
2. Midway **NFL BLITZ**
3. Namco **TEKKEN 3**
4. SNK **SAMURAI SHODOWN 64**
5. SNK **BLAZING STAR**
6. Namco **POINT BLANK**
7. SNK **KING OF FIGHTERS '97**
8. ICE **POLICE TRAINER**
9. Capcom **X-MEN VS SF**
10. Wintech **RED HAWK**

U • N • I • T • E • D

DEDICATED GAMES

1. Sega **HOUSE OF THE DEAD**
2. Incred. Tech **TOURNAMENT 3D GOLF**
3. Sega **GUN BLADE NY**
4. Atari **MAXIMUM FORCE**
5. Midway **MORTAL KOMBAT 4**
6. Sega **VIRTUA COP 2**
7. Namco **TIME CRISIS**
8. Dynamo **SOLITAIRE CHALLENGE**
9. Midway **RAMPAGE WORLD TOUR**
10. Sega **VIRTUAL ON**

CONVERSION GAMES

1. Midway **NFL BLITZ**
2. Namco **TEKKEN 3**
3. Incred. Tech **GOLDEN TEE '97**
4. Atari **AREA 51**
5. Incred. Tech **GOLDEN TEE 3D GOLF**
6. P&P **POLICE TRAINER**
7. Capcom **MARVEL VS SF**
8. Namco **POINT BLANK**
9. Taito **BUST-A-MOVE AGAIN**
10. Worldwide **STRIKERS 1945 PART 2**

N • E • W • Z • E

DEDICATED GAMES

1. Atari **SAN FRANCISCO RUSH THE ROCK**
2. Midway **OFF ROAD CHALLENGE**
3. Namco **TOKYO WARS 50"**
4. Atari **SAN FRANCISCO RUSH**
5. Sega **DAYTONA**
6. Sega **VIRTUA COP 2**
7. Midway **CRUIS'N THE WORLD**
8. Sega **SEGA RALLY**
9. Sega **SCUD TWIN**
10. Sega **MANX TT**

CONVERSION GAMES

1. Namco **TEKKEN 3**
2. Namco **TIME CRISIS**
3. Capcom **SF VS X-MEN**
4. Capcom **MARVEL VS CAPCOM**
5. Incred. **GOLDEN TEE GOLF '97**
6. Capcom **SF VS MARVEL**
7. Acclaim **JUDGE DREDD - THE GUN**
8. Capcom **SUPER GEM FIGHTERS**
9. Neo Geo **LAST BLADE**
10. Neo Geo **KING OF FIGHTERS '97**

J • A • P

DEDICATED GAMES

1. Namco **FINAL FURLONG**
2. Sega **GET BASS**
3. Taito **GO BY TRAIN**
4. Namco **RAPID RIVER**
5. Sega **HOUSE OF THE DEAD**

CONVERSION GAMES

1. Namco **NJ PROWRESTLING**
2. SNK **SAMURAI SHODOWN 64**
3. Sega **VIRTUA STRIKER 2**
4. Capcom **RIVAL SCHOOLS**
5. Namco **TEKKEN 3**

TIME OUT

RUSH THE ROCK - ATARI GAMES

Since it was almost precisely a year from Atari's San Francisco Rush first hitting the streets, then in the tradition of all successful games a sequel was just about due. Rush the Rock doesn't quite fit the bill; it's more an update than a sequel and is available as a kit form upgrade, but there's sufficient new challenge to make it of interest to fans.



upon the imagination of the programmers who have kindly included jumps from the higher levels of the prison's perimeter and a number of other features designed to make the game a touch quirky.

A battle mode with front-mounted guns against the likes of Al Capone and Machine Gun Kelly wouldn't have gone amiss and one can't help feel that the most hasn't been made of the surrounding water but, this said, Rush The Rock is largely more of the same good stuff ... not perhaps better, but certainly slightly different.

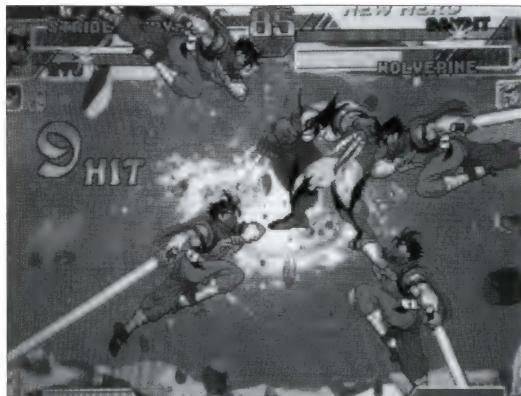
CAPCOM'S JUST MARVELOUS

This month sees the return of an old favourite: Hiryo, the main character of Capcom's classic game Strider, steps back into the arcades in Marvel vs Capcom Clash of the Super Heroes. It is the latest release in Capcom's Versus series, on the CPSII System.

Eight Capcom characters and seven Marvel characters comprise the 15 main warriors. Two playable characters may be joined by an additional third character, to be selected from a pool of 20. This third, or "buddy", character cannot be used as a playable fighter but may be used in an assisting role on a

limited number of occasions.

Old characters are endowed with new moves, such as the Hyper Combo. The key new feature is the Duo Team Attack, where the player can control two characters at the same time.



15

MOTOCROSS GO! - NAMCO

bike racing game where the player sits on the bike and, like always, chooses a course which is as easy or hard enough to suit his skills and needs. Not a new idea, but with Motocross Go! Namco has hit upon an in definable winning formula and produced one of the better racing games of recent times.

As the name suggests, the courses are over rugged terrain and, after choosing either a two or four-stroke machine the player sets off



over mud, cobbles, ramps and steps in an attempt to avoid the hideous mutilation of his on-screen alter ego and maybe even cross the winning line first. The machine is easy to control from both of the optional views and with a little skillful application of the brake and accelerator no turn is impossible

to make. The bike noise could be more convincing, but we're picking holes for the sake of it there ...

NFL BLITZ - MIDWAY

The NBA Jam team has turned its hand to the sport of American Football with the assumed aim of editing out the dull bits and creating something akin to entertainment. Gone are the thousand-man teams and endless tactical screens of games gone by and is in a seven-on-seven format and impressive reproduction of the bone-crunching sounds.

Created on 3DFX hardware, NFL Blitz is more than impressive in the graphics department and, although it doesn't dispense entirely with tactics, it keeps them to a minimum and allows the player to have plenty of fun. The NBA Jam influence prevails with turbo and the like and, although it might not be quite as easy to play as Midway might hope, this is a game which is

much more fun to play than the real thing is to watch.



TIME OUT

ACCOUNTANTS CORNER

DISTINGUISHING PROFIT FROM CASH FLOW

A common area of confusion with business people is the difference between cash flow and profit.

David McCone, an associate with Sparks Erskine says that he often has to explain that the healthy surplus in the month profit and loss account can't be spent because it's not yet in the bank, and the bank account shows a substantial overdraft.

Ross Erskine, a business strategy specialist at Sparks Erskine says this confusion can often lead to businesses making bad decisions which ultimately lead to financial problems.

"I expect just about every accountant has heard a client say that if I am making such a good profit, why don't I have any money in the bank, or why shouldn't I buy myself the luxury car I've always wanted?"

"While cash flow and profit are separate things, if the cash flow is not being watched, the profitability can be hurt," he said.

"There are a number of key performance indicators which business people should be produced regularly and taken into account by managers and owners to ensure the business is making profits, and then to ensure that the profits are converted into cash," Ross says.

He says these key performance

indicators can be financial, such as the gross profit percentage sales per wages expense, and stock turnover, as well as non financial. Non financial indicators can include occupancy rates and machine hours in use.

David adds that there are a number of financial management procedures which are very simple to implement but are overlooked in a surprising number of instances.

"These include inventory controls and watching the stock turnover," he said. "Often profit is tied up in lines that are sitting on the warehouse floors and not moving."

"Collection of debtors is another area that doesn't always receive the attention it should."

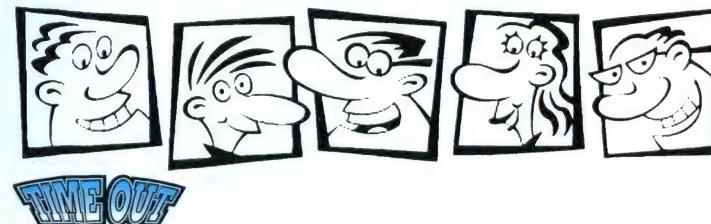
"Business owners are often surprised when it's pointed out to them how they are funding other people's businesses by not chasing their debts hard enough".

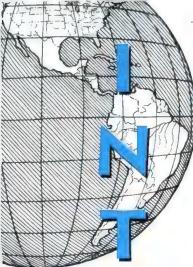
"And reducing the size of the bank overdraft by good debtor follow-up in itself increases profit."

"Another surprising area of weakness is lack of credit control where the excitement of getting a new customer and satisfying their needs overrides the prudent assessment of that customer's credit worthiness," David says.

"A bad debt goes straight to the bottom line and can easily destroy a month of profit."

The old adage "cash is king" is still a most relevant phrase in today's business world.





SPAIN

The growth of Sega FECs in Spain continues unabated with the opening of a new SegaPark in Cartagena.

Sega Amusements Spain S.L., based in Madrid, now has a chain of seven FECs across the country.

The latest one, situated in Cartagena's Central Comercial Pryca, covers 750sq.m. and has two bowling lanes and 40 coin-operated amusement machines.

They include the latest simulators such as Sega's Top Skater, Lost World, Motor Raid and Le Mans 24 as well as games from other manufacturers but, due to local

restrictions, no redemption games.

Cartagena is a major seaport in the Murcia Province of south-east Spain on the Mediterranean coast. The location itself is a large shopping precinct and the Sega centre is on the same floor as a McDonald's restaurant and multiplex cinema.

The other six SegaParks are in Madrid, Albacete, Barcelona, Valencia, Malaga and Burgos.

Mercedes Fernandex, assistant director of Sega Amusements Spain, told InterGame that there are two more SegaPark projects on the way, at Cadiz and Jerez.

CALIFORNIA TO KILL SMOKING BAN

Three short weeks after California's comprehensive statewide ban on smoking took effect in public sites on January 1, the state assembly voted in late January to repeal the ban for two years, pending adoption of federal statutes and guidelines on smoking bans. The repeal motion passed the assembly by just one more vote than the original (narrow) tally which was recorded last year to pass the ban in the first place.

The measure now goes to the California Senate, where it's expected to face a tough fight.

Quite a few California bars have refused outright to enforce the ban. Of those bars which had been enforcing it, news of the assembly's action caused many to drop their enforcement policies immediately - even though the repeal won't officially take effect until January 1 1999, assuming it passes the Senate and gets the governor's signature.

SURF PLANET

Atari Games is blazing new trails with Surf Planet, an exciting snowboarding game based on the winter sport that's caused a revolution on ski slopes worldwide. "Snowboarding has captured the imagination of younger generations because of the exciting combination of speed, creativity, precision and adrenaline," said Atari execs. "All these elements are woven together seamlessly in Surf Planet." Available as a JAMMA -compatible universal kit, the game ships this month.

Surf Planet features four different alpine tracks, rated by level of

difficulty. Players race down the mountain, passing each checkpoint and trying to make it to the finish line before time expires. In order to keep their snowboards moving at optimal speed, players must try to snag the "wax" icons as they race down the slope. To liven things up, the terrain is treacherous and packed with exciting jumps, moguls, and stunts that give players plenty of opportunity to catch some serious "air".



ON YOUR MARK...

Somebody should write a self-help book for the amusement machine industry. They could call it "Operators Are From Mars, Manufacturers Are From Venus." In this tradition of best-selling author John Gray, this book would explain how operators and manufacturers - just like men and women - have such radically different perspectives and instincts, that they might as well come from different planets.

As men and women do, operators and manufacturers will find life is sweeter when they speak each other's languages, respect each other's values, and meet each other's needs. In the "war between sexes," the future of the human race depends on it. In the endless squabble over funbiz, the industry's profitability depends on it.

Like men and women, operators and manufacturers sometimes get so angry that they condemn the other group wholesale... and declare a false independence. Could anyone possibly sound as ridiculous as an ultra-radical feminist chanting "a woman without a man, is like a fish without a bicycle?" Yes: male chauvinist, sneering along with Henry Higgins: "I'd prefer a new edition of the Spanish

Inquisition, than to ever let a woman in my life."

The coin-op equivalent of this "anti-love song" has equally familiar lyrics. Recognise this tune? "Who needs new equipment when my pool tables and jukeboxes are already paid for!" Conversely, some manufacturers may hum: "Who needs operators, we'll just get our own locations!" I say, phooey on both types of extremists.

They are shortsighted, arrogant and self-destructive ... doomed to become the lonely old maids (or grumpy old men) of the industry.

"When some manufacturers speak condescendingly of operators," RePlay publisher Eddie Adlum commented recently,

"they're

demonstrating an ignorance about this industry. The core of the amusement business is not found in a boardroom or hotel lobby bar. It's out there on the street where a whole lot of people we call "operators"

break their backs to make money, and on a daily basis. If more manufacturers could spend just a month working a route, they'd get a whole new respect for the operators ... and I bet that could show up in

machine features and in machine pricing."

Absolutely true. And yet, the reverse is equally true. Too many operators are totally blind to the amusement industry's big picture. Like that other "dream business," the movies, our industry sells an abstraction: the idea of fun. Also like the movies, we sell the same idea of fun to the entire world population - not just the barflies at the corner joint. What does it mean that players in Brunei, Brazil and Boston love the exact same games? Very simple: *that indefinable, intangible chemistry between machines and players around the globe is where the "real" industry exists.* All the rest of us are just highly dispensable middlemen.

It's no coincidence that this industry's original operator, jukebox inventor Charles Glass, was also its original manufacturer. Back in the 1890s, Mr Glass worked the daily grind exactly like today's top operators. Like today's best game creators, Glass also understood a larger reality: the universal spirit of fun sweeps aside all cultural, national, legal and economic boundaries. Ultimately, player/machine chemistry determines the destiny of this industry ... no the other way around.

If old Charlie Glass were alive today, what would he say to our operators and manufacturers? My guess: he'd probably send them to a John Gray "Mars/Venus" seminar ... and wish them a very happy Valentine's Day.

Courtesy Replay

ATEI SHOW

AMUSEMENT TRADES EXHIBITION INTERNATIONAL

January 27, 28, 29 1998

By Trev Allan

January is not the best time to visit London for obvious reasons. However people from as many as 103 countries converge on Earls Court Exhibition Halls every year for the 3 days. This is the 54th annual exhibition known by all as the ATEI and Leisure Parks Show.

This year was no exception with the attendance figures reaching yet another record of 20,000 guests for the 3 days.

The exhibition is definitely the largest on the European Calendar and arguably one of the most important international shows for the Amusement Industry.

All of the major manufacturers were represented either directly or through their official distributors. Among those were Sega, Namco, Williams, Bally, Midway, Atari to mention a few of the main international companies. Product display varied from the basic redemption and vending machines and merchandise to the high tech moving simulator rides.

Sega showed for the first time **Sega Rally 2** although the deluxe version was only 80% complete it will have when finished a moving seat, handbrake and will be linkable. It attracted a great deal of interest on the Deith Leisure stand but I never saw anyone have a second game.

Other Sega games to attract attention were **Harley Davidson & L.A. Riders** and the **Bass Fishing**.

Namco made a good effort with **Time Crisis 2**. This exciting new game is linkable in either deluxe or twin 29" version. **Downhill Bikers**, **Motocross Go**, **Rapid River** and **Final Furlong** all received constant attention and good comments such as **lets get some**.

Atari's stand was pretty much dominated by their new driver **California Speed**. A striking linkable game with good graphics very good visual appeal. However it seemed to me to be yet another driver that will earn well on the right location.

Konami spent a great deal of time and energy in displaying their new driver **Racing Jam**. Another good piece that unfortunately reminded me of Rave Racer.

It soon became very apparent that for a country the size of New Zealand we are up to date and in some cases well ahead of the rest of the world in bringing the latest and the best amusements to our customers.

The show for me held appeals in other areas such as the

kiddie rides, novelty games, redemption games, components and accessories if I can call them that.

The overall winner of best stand went to Playsafe Monitoring. This company provided sophisticated yet simple to use software for data retrieval and machine monitoring in both local and distant locations.

Kiddie Rides were once again present in large numbers with Modena Toys, Mitchells, Photo-Me, EMT, Jolly Roger and Falgas all exhibiting new rides. However, the demise of OMC in the middle of last year has sent shockwaves throughout the licensed ride manufacturers. The manufacturer of the Postman Pat Ride whom started the licensed rides craze, became a victim of their own success.

The UK and indeed Europe is reaching a point of saturation of kiddie rides, the novelty of a well-known character is no longer justification to charge more per ride or machine. However the old favourites such as the horse and cars still



TIME OUT

BALL-TIME UPDATED

erman pool table specialist Ball-Time, which produces time accounting systems for the sport, has come up with an updated version of its well-known device. The Ball-Time has 15 years' proven performance with many thousands of units in operation across Europe.

The company recently took its system to the US for the first time, exhibiting at the AMOA Show in Atlanta. The updated version offers 100 percent security, accountability and control of money. It is easy to operate and has variable rate

adjustment to ensure that players get just as much time with the game as they have paid for. There are a number of advantages for operators in a variety of location situations.

The system is tamper-proof and cannot be manipulated by players or by employees. It takes away the need to clear blocked ball returns, broken mechanisms and lodge balls in the door and therefore eliminates downtime.

The time control system always gives an accurate reading of time remaining.

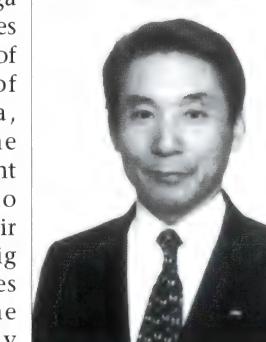
SHAKEUP AT SEGA...

Shoichiro Irimajiri was named the new president of Sega Enterprises (Japan), Japanese newspapers announced in mid-January. Former prexy Hayao Nakayama moved over to vice-chairman of the board of directors, where he's expected to retain direction over the coin-op end of Sega's business.

This news comes as Sega reported declining year-end numbers overall. Gross revenues were down 27.5%; profits fell by 16.5% compared to last year. The only good news was that coin-op sales rose 6.6%. Mr Irimajiri, a 30 year Honda exec, joined Sega in 1993. For the last 18 months, he's been VP at Sega Enterprises and CEO of Sega of America, where his assignment was to solve their rather big headaches in the highly

competitive home video game market. Sega still has big headaches there, but these problems are not seen as Mr Irimajiri's fault. Future GameWorks arcades are set to open in (among other places) Miami this summer and in Columbus, Ohio next year.

... Sega GameWorks coin-op president Al Stone has told our colleagues at the United Kingdom's InterGame magazine that, along with its traditional high-end products, the factory will also bring out "lower end" games in 1998, aimed directly at small operators and street locations. Al later confirmed to RePlay that this probably means a coin-op system will be coming along which uses a version of the technology from Sega's next home game platform, variously named "Naomi" or "Dural" or "Katana" depending on who's taking. A top Sega Japan exec has confirmed Microsoft is partnering in Dural, Next Generation Online reported January 25. Trade rumours suggest the coin-op version of the new platform will debut by this fall, followed by launch of the home console to Japan in late 1998.



BOARD ELECTED

At the annual general meeting of Australian trade association the National Amusement Machine Operators Association (NAMOA) Ltd., held at the Queensland Expo '97, the election of officers took place. Pictured is the full board of directors.

Front row, from L-R: Bruce Newton, Imelda McLean, Frank Sebastian (Chairman), George Campbell, Ken Corley & Paul Modica. Back row, L-R: Ray Lastelle, Max Griffiths, Terry Williams, Jonathan Wells, Charles Ver Linden & Allan Perry.



WMS REPORT

The SEC report filed by WMS confirms that a "successful" coin-op vidgame launch (defined as at least 5,000 units sold) nearly always translates into "at least" 100,000 sales of the home version of that title. WMS advised that GT Interactive has paid \$35m in licensing fees for rights to develop CD-ROM versions of WMS games for

the PC (home) market. And WMS provided some eye-opening statistics such as salaries, bonuses and stock positions for top execs, as well as the fact that Mortal Kombat products of all sorts (including licensing and spinoffs) accounted for 22 percent of revenues in 1997 (last year it was 34 percent).

ROUTES EDGED OUT

To some traditionally minded trade members it may seem like a case of the tail wagging the dog, but the fun centre market now absorbs at least an equal share of the industry's video game production and may actually be a larger market than traditional route operations.

That's according to documents filed with the US Securities and Exchange Commission by Midway

Games Inc., pursuant to its earlier announced plans to spin off that video game division from parent company WMS Inc. As the leading US manufacturer of coin-op video games, WMS has unquestioned credibility when it tells Uncle Sam that it "estimates that sales to route operators generally comprise between 45% and 50% of the coin-operated video game market."

continue to prosper as they did in our father's generation.

Electronic Dart Games are still a popular European Amusement Machine. Again these have developed from a simple Dart Board, blackboard and chalk as we know it to become an attractive machine with RGB monitor, automatic scoring etc and can even provide some competition.

Rowe AMI, Sound Leisure, Rockola and NSM Jukebox's as usual pumped out the music.

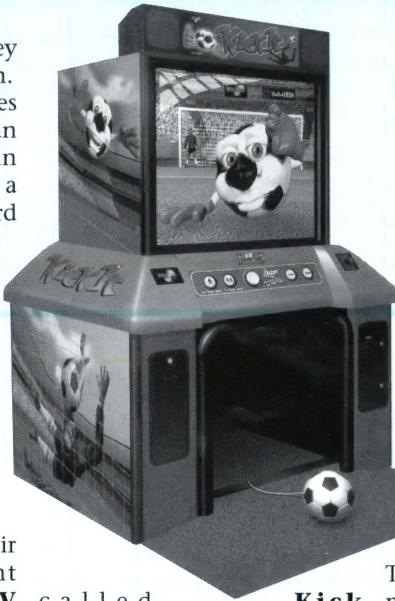
Rowe AMI gave a very good demonstration of their new Sound Enhancement System **TDS** and the new **CDV** kit allowing music video's recorded on CD to be reproduced on all later models of Rowe Jukebox.

Likewise Sound Leisure unveiled their new **CDV Model** in a dedicated upright unit.

The TDS System (True Dimensional Sound) was originally developed for the American Military for use on their submarine sonar's to allow better recognition of enemy vessels. Now standard on all Rowe Jukeboxes, it gives an unbelievable sound clarity and increase in volume. The Storm is the new wallmounted machine, being smaller, more compact, and very smart in appearance.

Redemption machines and products were again of a high standard. Capsule and egg venders along with an incredible range of fluffy toys, funny hats, and licensed character merchandise were the main attraction.

Ticket redemption machines also played a big part. Cromptons have a winner



called **KICK**, it combines a video display with a real soccer ball and gives our tickets to lucky punters. A real crowd drawer in a country where soccer rules.

Bouncy Castles had a brief mention but because of the high costs associated with floor space rental for the show many of the main manufacturers left examples of their products at home. Those that did show reported extremely good interest from FEC's and Holiday Parks. This is seen as a need by the larger organisations to encourage more direct family participation in leisure activities.

Coin and note validation, such as important part of our business, again attracted a great deal of attention. Coin Controls, Mars, NRI, Asahi Seiko, GPT, CoinMechanisms, and Innovative Technologies to name only a few.

Of real interest was the new developments in the gaming market. Coin Controls showing a definite interest with

their new **Gamesman** and **Paytrack Hoppers** and **Condor** the new fast feed coin validator for the gaming machines with an accept rate of up to 10 coins per second.

Innovative Technologies have reduced the price of the smile note validator while again improving its reliability and setting a new standard in quality and price.

Change machines of all types were well represented in size, shape, features and price. Perhaps the most impressive again, the Thomas Automatics range of machines but the downside is that they come at a premium price due to the high value of the English pound.

Essentially it was a very good show and well worth the effort. One could be forgiven for expecting that the price charged for food included the service of the young lady's working the food stands while you ate. That again is a reflection of the high exchange rate and that be the main problem facing the UK amusement industry at present along with a severe shortage of new, high earning, sensibly priced, popular, coin operated amusement equipment.

I will be back again next winter and hope to see a few more Kiwi faces in the crowd. Grant Davidson of Music Makers Ltd Auckland lost his expensive suit after the first day in favour of more kiwi attire as can be seen in the photo. His last passing comment was how many Rally's would he get in exchange for a Jukebox. His kids would love one each at home.

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25

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SESAME STREET KIDDIE RIDES

Kiddie Ride Enterprises (Edgewood, N.Y.) has secured the license to manufacture and market rides based on the Sesame Street characters owned by the Children's Television Workshop. License rights were among assets of Just Kiddie Rides acquired by KRE. Products are built right here in the mainland US with final assembly at KRE's Edgewood facilities. The rides were designed and sculpted by a Sesame Street artist; they feature talking, animated, music characters and interactive effects. Titles include Elmo & Zoe's EZ Rider Racecar ... Bert & Ernie's 123 Fire Engine (pictured) ... and Big Bird Jet Way's Airplane. KRE reported selling over 150 units in their first two weeks on the market. Features include easy access to all components; serviceability of all parts without ride disassembly; lifetime maintenance-free wheels and bearings; unique fan-cooled motor and reducer; new "Accu-Track" motion system; top quality components; ultra-durable powder-coating of frame and chassis; strain



reliefs and rubber grommets for motor, chassis and wire harness; UV-protected & weatherproof electrical cables; custom-engineered foot pegs; towbar hitch on ride frame; dual coin box with capacity 20% greater than industry average; state of the art, solid state sound system and timer board. Ride cost is \$3,995. Readers are urged to phone in orders fast. KRE will also display these products at next month's ASI Show.

A SAD DAY FOR THE INDUSTRY

It is with deep regret and sorrow that I have to inform you of the death of Joe Dillon.

Joe a friend and long time colleague died in the early hours of Saturday morning. His funeral was held on Wednesday the 18th of

February in Chicago.

I am sure that you will agree that Joe was an amazing person first and foremost as well as a leading ambassador for our industry. His legacy will live on forever, and he will be dearly missed.

CHART TOPPING GAMES

Chart topping games in Japan for 1997 were: Kits - 1. Tekken 3 by Namco, 2. X-Men vs Streetfighter by Capcom, 3. Puzzle Bobble 3 by Taito; Dedicated Videos - 1. Virtua Fighter 3 by Sega, 2.

Virtua On-Cyber Troopers by Sega, 3. Go By Train by Taito; Other Arcade Games - 1. Print Club by Atlus/Sega, 2. Neo Print by SNK, 3. Name Card Club by Sega.

YEN CRISIS DEPRESSES INDUSTRY

Ihe trends in Japan are dominated by the current financial crisis which is facing nearly all of the Asian countries to some degree. The yen stood at 130 to the US\$ as InterGame was going to press and this is having a depressing effect on the coin machine industry in Japan.

"The Japanese are not prone to putting their money into unsafe places," said one western observer of the coin machine industry.

"They won't put their money into banks because too many banks are going bust and they won't put their money into machines because the money goes from machines into banks. They're putting their money under their beds for the moment."

The upshot is a coin machine industry deeply depressed and that may become obvious at the AOU Show due to be held in Tokyo this month.

Meanwhile the leading Japanese coin machine companies are struggling to hold on to their positions prior to the "crash". Namco appears to have suffered the least, although it is

now officially forecasting profits lower than last year.

Konami has lost some ground while Sega's share price has been slashed from \$47 last September to around \$23 now. It is having a good run currently, however, with Virtual Striker 2 and House of the Dead, which makes sales look better, whatever its consumer games side is doing.

It's main rival in consumer games, meanwhile, Nintendo, has seen its share price shoot up from \$76 to \$153 in the past few months as a result of the success of its N64.

All of this means somewhat little for the western coin machine operator.

In Europe, for example, a stronger currency against the yen will not help in most cases because all of the major Japanese makers of coin machines are now built in Europe; indeed, in some cases European offices of Japanese companies actually export their games to Japan through their distributors.

SEGA GAMEWORKS

Sega GameWorks in the US has concluded a major deal with national chain store Walmart under which a special promotion will be connected with the installation of Sega games throughout the stores.

Each of the 2,500 Walmart stores currently takes around three video games, but under the agreement, Sega and Walmart officials seek to increase this to five up to eight games. Initially, Sega GT driving games are to form the basis of the promotion. Walmart has sent a circular to the independent operators serving its stores urging them to become involved in the Sega GT promotion.

Initial testing has shown a remarkable increase of around 468

percent on income from coin machines operated in the stores, according to Sega GameWorks Vice President of Sales and Marketing Ken Anderson. "We are confident that these figures are not isolated and that there will be an across-the-board uplift. Walmart is keen to see it happen and the letter to operators says that a Walmart representative would be contacting them to see if they are taking part. We have worked with the operators on this so they are fully aware of what is going on. Around 60 operators are involved in the games running in Walmart stores and they were invited to a meeting in Atlanta where we outlined the plans."